Infrastructure by Pastor Katy

It’s been a live question lately: what is infrastructure? (This might seem like a strange question for a church newsletter. Hang in there for just a bit.)

There are some obvious answers: infrastructure means roads, bridges, power grids, the water supply, mass transit, airports, and sewer systems. Infrastructure is sometimes invisible to our daily routine (thankfully, most of us don’t see the intricacies of the sewer system very often), but when it disappears or malfunctions, we notice. We realize how dependent we are on people and systems we frequently take for granted.

Lately, there’s been additional conversation about “human infrastructure”: things like affordable childcare, universal preschool, health care access, support for those with disabilities, improved nutrition, and immigration reform. Whether we agree on the policies that make these happen, it’s eye-opening to think about how infrastructure isn’t just stuff: it’s people, and decisions that impact our everyday lives in a million ways.

So, why a conversation about infrastructure in a church newsletter? Have you guessed? Churches have infrastructure too. Sure, that means things like making sure the lights are on (and the power bill gets paid), setting up the chairs, fixing the little things that malfunction around the building, checking in the library books, ordering toilet paper, printing bulletins, filling up the oil in candles, and setting up communion for Sundays.

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Pastor's Letter (continued)

Truthfully, almost all the infrastructure in a congregation is the human kind. Ushers, assisting ministers, acolytes, musicians, preachers; council members, committees, and volunteers; Sunday School teachers (and students!), confirmation small group leaders; regular givers and folks who count the offering; preschool teachers and quilters; teachers and learners; of all the things we've realized over the past two years, it's that the church isn't just a building – it's the people. We're the infrastructure – God’s work is done by our hands.

As the new year starts, I invite you to think about yourself as an integral part of the infrastructure at HSLC. Is there a new way you'd like to volunteer, or something you're ready to pick back up again? Could you try ushering, or joining a committee, or making a quilt, or setting up a regular giving pattern? Would you want to try being an assisting minister, or volunteering for Sunday School, making coffee for Sundays, or joining the Anti-Racism forum? There are so many vibrant, life-giving ministries at HSLC and so many ways to participate.

Above all, thank you. Thank you for being the church no matter where you are. Thank you for being the infrastructure of God’s kingdom – God’s way of mercy, justice and peace – inside the walls of the church building and throughout the community. What a gift it is to be the church together.

Happy new year!
Pastor Katy

Coffee Hour with Pastor Gina

Hi all! Pastor Gina here. I have been so blessed by the warm welcome I've received from everyone in the congregation. I have been working on names (thank you to those who have been wearing name tags!), but it's difficult to really get to know people on a Sunday morning.

So, beginning in January, I will be offering a small group “Coffee Hour with Pastor Gina” at 10 am on the 1st and 3rd Fridays and 2nd Saturdays of each month. I'll host them in the Fellowship Hall where coffee as well as hot water for tea and hot chocolate will be provided, and we will talk about anything you want. It's just another opportunity for me to get to know you better and you to get to know me better as well.

Look for ways to sign-up for these Coffee Hours in the weekly eNews and Sunday announcements!

Women’s Retreat

Our long-awaited Women’s Retreat has returned! Join us January 28th – 30th at the Rainbow Lodge Retreat Center in North Bend for a time of fun and fellowship. The theme for the retreat will be “Relax, Renew, and Restore,” with conversation sessions led by Pastor Gina Herman. Cost is $200 for a shared room, with limited single rooms available (talk with Pastor Katy). Vaccination required. To register for the retreat, visit the Women’s Retreat page on the HSLC website.
Read a Biography in January!

Why is “biography and memoir” one of the most popular non-fiction genres of reading? A good biography teaches the reader about a particular time and place in a more focused and accessible way than many history books. At the same time, it illuminates the life of a particular human being and thus provides a springboard for self-reflection. This combination of outer and inner focus makes biography a great choice for January. It might even replace the ritual of making resolutions!

The HSLC library has a good and varied choice of biography and memoir. They are easy to find: when you enter the library, turn to your right. Biographies are in the first section of bookshelves past the door to the library office. For January there will also be some on display in the windows and on the counter; help yourself to these also.

If you have time for a big, fat, traditional biography on a famous person, we have some of those. How about Nelson Mandela, Alexander Hamilton, or Flannery O’Connor? Or a memoir by a famous person like Barack Obama, Maya Angelou, or Jimmy Carter?

Maybe you would prefer a smaller book on someone less well-known, but still important. Perhaps C. S. Lewis, Wangari Maathai or Malala Yousafzai (Nobel Peace Prize winners), or Sonia Sotomayor?

Or maybe you want something really light. A well-written memoir can still offer a look at the inner and outer worlds, and be amusing besides. We have those too. Try James Herriot, the rural vet of BBC fame. Or Heather Lende, a mother in small town Alaska.

Come take a look and see what strikes your fancy. Or try any biography you have been meaning to read. Either way, happy reading!

HSLC Chancel Choir Survey

With the recent re-introduction of congregational singing at Holy Spirit, we are thrilled to say that it is time for us to finalize plans for restarting HSLC’s Chancel Choir, hopefully in the new year!

There are a couple of possible ways that the Chancel Choir can proceed. To help finalize plans, we need all those who may be interested in adult choir to fill out this VERY brief online survey: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/S67XRCM

Choir members past, present, and future are all welcomed to share your thoughts. If you have questions, contact Eric Peterson at ericpe@elbk.com.

Scholarship Opportunity

Members and friends of Holy Spirit Lutheran Church who are pursuing seminary education, are enrolled at an ELCA Lutheran seminary, or are enrolled at an ELCA affiliated college or university are invited to apply for the Bruce Paul Hauge Memorial Scholarship. Applications are accepted beginning January 1, 2022 and due no later than May 15, 2022 to the Holy Spirit church office.

Applications are available from the Holy Spirit Lutheran Church office. Awards to eligible applicants will be made in June 2022.
Common Hope Vision Team Brings Back Experiences from Guatemala

On Sunday evening, January 23rd from 6:00-7:30 pm, the individuals from our Holy Spirit community will share their experiences from their trip to Guatemala in February 2020 to assist Common Hope.

Common Hope works to end the cycle of poverty for children in Guatemala through a holistic, relationship-based model. While education is at the heart of their work, they believe a comprehensive approach is critical for children and families to reach their full potential. Holy Spirit’s team was completely immersed in these activities, including building a home for a family, filling food bags, visiting families with social workers, and interacting with students and Common Hope staff.

In addition to the country’s beautiful landscapes, we encountered a people who find joy in life’s simple pleasures. More than half of Guatemalans live below the poverty line and 25% live in extreme poverty earning less than $2/day. There is limited access to health care and major causes of death still include treatable illnesses and diseases. Holy Spirit’s travellers observed inadequate housing conditions, homes without roofs or sufficient living space, crafted from scrap metal and dirt floors, and without potable water or sanitation systems.

A group will be going to Guatemala again in February of 2023. If you may be interested in joining, the program on January 23rd is an opportunity to learn more about Common Hope and hear first-hand from individuals who visited Guatemala in February 2020.

For more information or to get the Zoom link, contact Doug Jacobson at ddjacobson@frontier.com.

HSLC Caring Fund

HSLC Caring Fund provides temporary financial support for basic needs to HSLC members, regular attendees, and the wider community in times of hardship or crisis. During the Covid-19 pandemic, we have been providing grocery cards to Lake Washington Pantry Packs program, Attain Housing, HopeLink, Sophia Way, and New Bethlehem as well as giving grocery cards to individual requests as needed. Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have given away just over $52,000 from the HSLC Caring Fund.

If you would like to contribute to the HSLC Caring Fund, please make your donation to HSLC and note that your gift is for the Caring Fund. Donations can be made online or by sending a check through the mail. Thank you for your support.

Sign up for Flowers!

The 2022 Flower Signup Chart is now available on the kiosk in the narthex. You are invited to sign up (in person or by calling the church office) to provide flowers for our Sunday worship services between now and the end of the year. If there is a special designation (such as an anniversary), please note that as well. You may bring flowers from your garden in a vase from home, or order a bouquet from a local florist or grocery store. Please be sure to take them home after worship on that Sunday.
**Holy Spirit Lutheran Church**  
**Finance News**  

**Fiscal Year 2022**  
**Income & General Fund Trends**

$108,950 is the average monthly income required to support the current fiscal year’s budget ($25,142 per week).

Year-to-date income through November is higher than expenses by $18,878, due to expenses running 23.4% below budget year to date.

**Fiscal Year 2022**  
**General Support Giving Pyramid**

Dollar ranges represent average weekly congregational member giving from July through November.  
**Bolded numbers** represent the number of church members that are giving within each range this year.  
**NOTE:** Cash contributions are not included as they cannot be assigned to a church member.

For any questions on this financial update, please email tpdunlap@comcast.net

The church’s fiscal year runs from July to June.
Worship on Sundays - 8:00, 9:30 and 11:00 AM

Masks required for all over 2 years of age
Childcare available at 9:30 am and 11:00 am
Online Worship continues

Go Paperless!

If you’d like to reduce waste and not receive a paper copy of this monthly newsletter, please let us know. A digital copy of this monthly newsletter comes out with our weekly enews updates, and is also available via our website. Contact office@hslickirkland.org to update your communication preferences. Thank you!